

The Power of Podcasting



in Higher Education Marketing

Podcasts are an increasingly popular tool in higher education. It is a great way to **showcase expertise** and **share knowledge**. It can also allow universities to **reach prospective students**. An effective podcast can propel marketing efforts forward and have a strong impact.

50% of all homes listen to podcasts*

16 million people in the U.S. are “avid podcast fans”*

Why Podcast?

Podcasts can establish and maintain a connection with your target audience. Engaging, compelling, informative, entertaining—but never salesy—content will lead your podcast to success.

Podcasts also offer universities an opportunity to engage with current and prospective students alike. For example, episodes about career development, work-life balance, and study tips can benefit current learners as well as prospective ones.



Getting Started



1 Determine if you can successfully execute a podcast.

Be realistic about whether your team has the qualifications, time, resources, budget, and skills to create, record, publish, and publicize quality podcasts consistently.

2 Focus on a clear premise for content.

A podcast needs to be based on a clearly defined concept rather than a vague idea. Some might focus on thought leadership and research; others may be tied to a prominent academic program or an issue important to your school or the region.

3 Define what success looks like.

Don't start a podcast just because it's trendy. You should have a strong strategy with goals and metrics. Ask yourself:

- What is the purpose of the podcast?
- Who is it for?
- How does it fit into your school's overall mission and brand?
- How will you measure its success?

4 Assemble a dedicated team.

While some individuals produce shows on their own, most podcasts require multiple people. Some staff members may end up handling several responsibilities, but you'll need people focused on story development and production, hosting, recording, mixing and editing, promotion, listener relations, and data analysis.

5 Choose the right equipment and space.

- Invest in quality microphones and headphones
- Determine which recording software and hosting platform(s) to use
- Figure out which technology to use for audio from call-in guests so it is crisp and clear
- Find a quiet recording space free from interruptions or outside noise. If you have a campus radio station nearby, check if the studio is available

6 Create a plan for your show.

This is the fun part. First, establish general guidelines. How long will each show be? When will it come out? How often? It's helpful to plan a season's worth of shows, leaving flexibility for unforeseen developments or news. Once you have a general schedule, you can plan each episode: the topic, host, guest, etc. You can also decide on theme music and a recorded introduction.

7 Diversify your distribution channels.

There are several platforms for podcasts, so you'll want to make your show available on a variety of them. Popular options include Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Spotify, Stitcher, TuneIn, SoundCloud, Blubrry, and Player FM.

8 Promote your podcast to your intended audience.

- Share individual episodes on social media with relevant hashtags
- Link to your podcast from relevant pages on your website
- Add a link in marketing emails, both in a signature and in promotional blasts
- Write a supplementary blog post on the podcast topic with a link to the episode and a transcript, which helps with accessibility and search engine optimization



Suggested Listening

Listening to other higher ed podcasts is an excellent way to familiarize yourself with the medium, find out which podcasts are already covering, and figure out what formats you do and don't like. Here are some suggestions:



An Educated Guest

Each episode of *An Educated Guest* is moderated by Todd Zipper, President of Wiley Education Services, and focuses on the innovation that is driving change in higher education and careers. This story is told through the unique perspectives of leaders in the industry.



Higher Ed Social

This bi-weekly podcast is dedicated to those who work in higher education, most notably the amazing people who make colleges and universities work and run smoothly.



Teaching in Higher Ed

A must for faculty, this podcast explores the art and science of being more effective in facilitating learning. Professors will also enjoy the discussions about how they can personally increase their productivity.



The EdTech Podcast

The mission of this podcast is “to improve the dialogue between ‘ed’ and ‘tech’ through storytelling, for better innovation and impact.” Education leaders from around the globe give an inside look into how different parts of the world are improving their technology.

Podcasts provide an intimate form of communication, leading to greater engagement with your audience. Adding this tool to your university's marketing strategy can be a smart route to success when building connections with your audience.

Source: “Professional development: Marketing and higher ed podcasts you should be listening to” and “The potential of podcasting in higher education marketing” by Donna Talarico, in *Recruiting & Retaining Adult Learners*, Vol. 21, Issues 9 and 10.

* <https://www.podcastinsights.com/podcast-statistics/>